

TRANSCRIPTIONS



**WR Emmanuel Sanders
Press Conference – January 15, 2020
San Francisco 49ers**

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Does this week give you a sense, it's ramping up here in terms of the hype and what's at stake?

“I don't feel it ramping up. It's crazy. Doesn't even- it just feels like another regular-season game. Like I said, I feel like even in the regular season it was like playoff football. It was so much pressure and us having to perform and trying to get the No. 1 seed that you just kind of get used to it, right. Every week's been a big week ever since I feel like the third game I've been here. So you just kind of get used to everybody saying, ‘Oh, yeah, the pressure here; the pressure is that; it's a big game; we've got to have the biggest game if we want to do this and we want to do that.’ I think it's a good thing, you know, to have that kind of environment instead of everybody say, ‘Oh, it's a big game this week,’ and everybody letting the pressure take control of it. Instead, you kind of just get used to the pressure, if that makes sense.”

For some of the young guys, I'm sure nerves are a natural thing. Considering the stage guys are on, how do you help some of the younger, especially receivers, who haven't been in this kind of position before?

“I don't think they even know truthfully, I'm telling you, the locker room is just so loose. I feel like we have a great core of guys. Obviously, the young guys, you look at [WR] Kendrick Bourne last week and how he performed and how he was even acting how he made a catch, smiling, having a good time and then [WR] Deebo [Samuel] making plays. Those guys just being themselves. I've been enjoying being around them because they don't even feel the pressure. They don't even know what's going on. They are just playing football and having fun and I think that, you know, sometimes when you get in this game at this level, you forget about the fun part of it. You take it way too serious, and like I said, I've been enjoying being around those guys because they definitely are at the core football, which is a game and they make it fun. So, we're going to continuously do that and have fun.”

You played for some of the greatest organizations in the league and now you're here. What is it about being in this building, around these former players, these current players that, could lift a team that was 4-12 a year ago to this game?

“Yeah, I'm big on energy and positive energy and if you have the right nucleus of guys around, you know things are going to work out. You know, I was watching the quarterback from LSU, he was talking about the game, the quarterback from Clemson,

he was talking about the game versus LSU. He was saying the best team is going to win. That usually happens most games. Sometimes you put it on certain players, but the best team, the best overall time is going to win. I feel like [general manager] John [Lynch] and [head coach] Kyle [Shanahan], they did a great job of assembling and giving us depth because we have three running backs. I feel like we've got five receivers. We've got depth on this team and overall that makes us a better team and just like you said, just being in this organization and seeing it and being a part of it, it's special. When I think of this organization, I never forget touching down in Seattle and seeing all those fans out there, even though I've only been here for like, you know, five, six weeks, to be able to poke my chest out and feel like I'm part of something special, it was amazing. That's what we are trying to do. We are trying to continue that and hopefully go all the way to the Super Bowl and win that."

Levi's Stadium wasn't really known as a home-field advantage stadium in its initial years, but were you feeling a build of the home crowd and home-field advantage as this thing has moved on?

"Especially last week. Truthfully, I've been on the road versus New Orleans, versus Baltimore and I don't know, my mind is wired like I'm like that dog that if you throw a bone like I don't even think about nothing. My mind is on that. And so, when I go in the stadium sometimes, I don't hear the crowd or anything, and everybody else is talking about it because I can just lock it in. I don't know if that's experience or not but I'm sure the opponent, they hear the crowd because they are loud, I love the music in the stadium definitely plays a factor, and I feel like they gave us energy, as well."

What do you remember about your first Championship Game you played in?

"My first title game was in 2013. I was a rookie. We were playing against the Jets, [former QB] Mark Sanchez and we got up on them pretty good and I remember second half just watching the clock, just running the ball, let's go to the Super Bowl. How I handled that, I came in with [former Steelers WR] Antonio Brown and we were the young guys. We were the rookies. We had guys like [former Steelers WR] Antwaan Randle El and [former Steelers WR] Hines Ward to tell us. I remember once the playoffs started, Hines was like, 'All the extracurricular activities you guys are doing, get rid of those, get rid of the extracurricular and let's hone in on trying to do something special now,' and we were able to do that. That's why I kind of tell young guys as well let's lock in for two or three weeks and at the end hopefully we'll be saying we're the world champs and the off-season is yours. They will be calling you "Champ" all the way up until next season."

Can you talk about QB Jimmy Garoppolo and the fact that outside he doesn't seem to get a lot of credit even though all he does is win?

"I think from that standpoint, I think from a team perspective, we have so many great pieces. When you talk about the defensive line, when you talk about the secondary, when you talk about the linebackers, we got depth. When you talk about the running game that we have, when you talk about the passing game, it's hard to target one player and say, 'Oh, he is the reason why they are winning,' and I think that that's the reason why they don't give Jimmy all the credit because they are saying, 'Oh, he's not the

absolute reason why they are winning.' We have so many different ways that we can win, but at the end of the day, where they can't say that he isn't, is because he's won, he's a winner. The games that we weren't running the ball where we had 34 yards, you'll see Jimmy go out and throw five touchdown passes and 400 yards. So, I love that, that aspect that we can run the ball and pass the ball. So that's kind of why he's not getting that credit, but he is a baller and I'm happy he's my quarterback for sure."

How important is team chemistry?

"It's very important. Last week Kyle, he pretty much gave a speech to the team and sometimes in this league, you come to work and you clock in, you clock out, and truthfully, I enjoy being around these guys. The speech that Kyle gave was that there's so much love between this team and how much we care about each other and I looked around, I looked at Deebo, I looked at KB, I looked at the receiver corps; I said, 'Man, I genuinely do love these guys.' It's a great group of guys to go to work with every day; a fun group of guys to go to work with. I feel like when you have that kind of chemistry, and it's all throughout this team and all throughout this organization, I feel like when you have that, the sky is the limit. We're not in this position- it's not a coincidence, you know. We worked our butt off on the field and off the field and I feel like we are deserving of this moment and we got to take advantage of it."